



Lord Kitchener poster, 1914

Imperialism

This is the second part of a series on Anti-Imperialism, War and Peace. We are not only concerned to discover Imperialism, but to see it in its particular aspect of war-mongering. [Image: Lord Kitchener, master of war and lying face of Imperialism]

In Chapter 7 of "[Imperialism, The Highest Stage of Capitalism](#)" (attached) Lenin "sums up" in a highly compressed way as to what capitalist imperialism is. In the first paragraph, among other things, he says:

“...the monopolies, which have grown out of free competition, do not eliminate the latter, but exist above it and alongside it, and thereby give rise to a number of very acute, intense antagonisms, frictions and conflicts.”

A little later on Lenin writes: *“... politically, imperialism is, in general, a striving towards violence and reaction.”* The truth of this statement has never been more apparent than it is today.

South Africa has seen Imperialism in all its aspects, but especially in war. It was the [Anglo-Boer War](#) of 1899-1902 that announced Imperialism's intentions to the world, as much as the [Spanish-American War](#) of 1898 did, or the defeat of the [Khalifa Abdallahi](#)'s forces at [Omdurman](#) in Sudan by the British under Kitchener in that same year of 1898. The system of state-monopoly capital and dominance of the mineral-energy complex over the South African productive economy dates from that time, and it has never been fundamentally changed. To change it will mean a new confrontation with Imperialism.

Imperialism is a system of war. Lenin pours scorn on *“Kautsky's silly little fable about "peaceful" ultra-imperialism,”* calling it *“the reactionary attempt of a frightened philistine to hide from stern reality.”*

Lenin concludes:

“The question is: what means other than war could there

be under capitalism to overcome the disparity between the development of productive forces and the accumulation of capital on the one side, and the division of colonies and spheres of influence for finance capital on the other?”

The age of Imperialism, for nearly 120 years, has been an age of war, just as Lenin predicted it would be. From Lenin's work to that of William Blum's "[Killing Hope](#)" it is clear that Imperialism is an aggressive force which at some stage will have to be confronted, and annihilated. One cannot hope to be exempt from this confrontation forever.

- The above is to introduce the original reading-text: [Imperialism, The Highest Stage of Capitalism, Chapter 7, 1916, Lenin](#).
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